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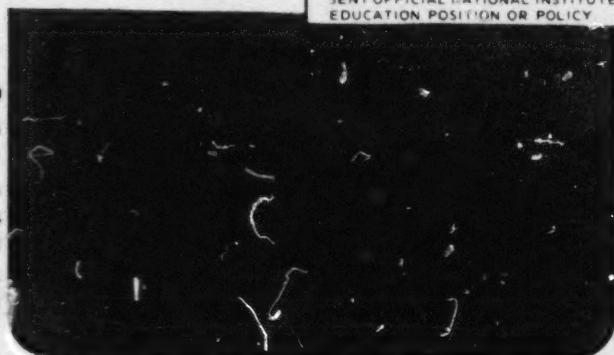
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ABSTRACT

Competency-based instructional programs are being discussed in many, and enacted in some, educational districts. Reports of this process from Oregon, California, and Ohio are included among the 12 entries in an annotated bibliography. All entries are from the ERIC system. (MLF)

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Competency-Based Education

Anderson, Earl N. "Coping with Oregon's New Competency-Based Graduation Requirements—View from a Practitioner." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Washington, D.C., April 1975, 13 pages. ED 105 594.

As a result of his position with the Metropolitan Administrative Service Center, which serves four Oregon counties, Anderson is qualified to speak on the specific problems involved in implementing the new statewide competency requirements for graduation from Oregon high schools. Anderson cites several problems with the Oregon plan that administrators who are involved in similar programs should be aware of.

The major problems involved time and money: not enough of either. Local school districts and the State Board of Education did not budget enough money to provide for inservice training, professional help, or professional visitation. At the same time, sch. of districts were actually given only one year to completely define and write the goals of the new curriculum. Since the new program often required extensive record-keeping procedures, one year was not enough to devise and implement new plans.

Anderson reports that the greatest number of problems occurred with the actual writing and defining of competencies. School personnel were not sufficiently trained in these areas, and not enough models existed to be of any help. Anderson reports that this lack of models forced districts back on their own resources, which he felt was valuable. In many instances, school districts found it helpful to form consortia to develop programs in conformity with the state requirements.

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Association of California School Administrators. "The Hart Act (AB 3408)." *ACSA Special Report*, 6, 3 [January 1977]. 13 pages. ED number not yet assigned.

The state of California recently passed the Hart Act, which mandates that school districts prepare lists of competencies and means of assessing minimal competencies in secondary education, but stops short of requiring specific competencies or requiring a statewide exam. This special report is an interview with Assemblyman Gary Hart, the bill's author, and

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Materials were selected for inclusion from the ERIC catalogs *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*.

Don McKinley, chief deputy to the superintendent of public instruction. In the interview, they discuss the implications of the Hart Act and graduation and competency standards in general.

As a former teacher, Hart believes that the diploma as a device for certifying competence is almost meaningless. Possession of the diploma is no guarantee that a student has achieved basic skills in reading, writing, and computation. To renew trust in the diploma will cause "psychological stress" in some situations, Hart acknowledges, but that is the price one must pay for the diploma to be a true indicator of achievement. At most, he estimates, the requirements will involve only the bottom quartile of a class.

Will the requirements create de facto segregation of minorities into remedial classes? Not necessarily, Hart replies, but he is not concerned if it does. What does concern him is "that those students who have deficiencies currently may not be receiving any kind of remedial help in school." A student who is deficient in some area must be truly given a chance to make up that deficiency.

Hart stresses that the California bill offers mostly recommendations and suggestions to school districts. It offers many different assessment options and allows local districts great latitude in defining learning handicapped students. Most of all, says McKinley, "we have to be careful to maintain a positive learning climate, to provide the alternatives so people indeed do have the opportunities and feeling of success."

Order copies from Association of California School Administrators, 1575 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, California 94010. \$0.50. Order MF from EDRS, \$0.83.

Canadian Teachers' Federation. *Continuing Education for Teachers. Bibliographies in Education. No. 53.* Ottawa, Ontario: 1975. 71 pages. ED 115 652.

With the increasing popularity of competency-based instructional programs and competency-based teacher education, more and more attention is being paid to the importance of continuing education. This partially annotated bibliography lists significant articles from 1970 to 1975.

Although much of the material deals with continuing education in general, several items might be of interest to administrators involved in implementing competency-based

EA 009 079

instruction programs. Of special interest might be entries on curriculum development by teacher, effects of inservice training on student learning, specific inservice programs, and planning and organizing inservice teacher education.

Order copies from Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P 1B4. No price quoted.

Glick, I. David, and others. "CBE: How to Prevent a Second Orthodoxy." *Educational Technology*, 15, 8 (August 1975), pp. 17-20. EJ 123 016.

In the last two years, Glick declares, competency-based education (CBE) "has assumed the characteristics of a movement." This movement proposes an alternative to the traditional curriculum where content is selected by the teacher, where all students learn the key facts and concepts in the same time frame, where evaluation of all students is norm-referenced, and where teaching is applied in a uniform manner to all students. By contrast, in a CBE curriculum content is sequenced in terms of competencies to be mastered, objectives are stated in performance terms, evaluation is criterion-referenced, and teaching varies according to the needs of the students. In short, CBE "promises to restructure the educational process."

To prevent competency-based education from becoming entrenched like previous educational orthodoxies, Glick proposes a model for a schoolwide or districtwide review board. These boards would be composed of teachers who would regularly review programs for their effectiveness, make CB policy, share information with other schools or districts, and coordinate programs. CBE, by its very nature, provides many opportunities for internal and external evaluation, says Glick. In fact, perhaps its greatest virtue as a curriculum "is this built-in potential of self-correction through feedback."

Golub, Lester S. "A Development Cycle for a Competency-Based English Curriculum, Grades K-12." Unpublished study at Pennsylvania State University, 1974. 11 pages. ED 098 580.

Golub's cycle for a competency-based English curriculum recognizes that student abilities develop from level to level and not from grade to grade. He divides the English curriculum into six general levels of ability, beginning with kindergarten and ending with high school graduation. At each of these levels, Golub maintains, students should be able to demonstrate specific learning behaviors that can be tested.

These achievement levels define only the framework of the curriculum. The content consists of the specific areas: listening, speaking, reading, writing, language, literature, and media. Learners are expected to achieve a very specific set of objectives in each of these content areas at each of the six achievement levels. For example, a learner on level one will learn to develop vocabulary, follow simple auditory directions, discriminate sounds of vowels and consonants, and recite and recognize the alphabet. Golub describes a typical set of objectives for each of these six levels and provides brief examples of test criteria.

Golub's work is valuable in that it concisely and clearly formulates an entirely open and flexible English curriculum for the entire elementary and secondary program. The model provides examples of content, criterion tests, and a rough timetable to measure progress.

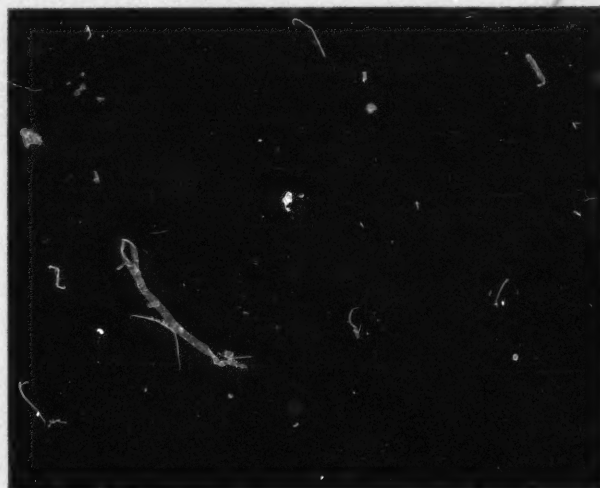
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Heath, Robert W., and Nielson, Mark A. "The Research Basis for Performance-Based Teacher Education." *Review of Educational Research*, 44, 4 (Fall 1974), pp. 463-484. EJ 114 985.

The theories of performance-based education include more than the structure of the curriculum. The concept of behavioral objectives is being applied to every area of educational concern, from training building management and district personnel to the stating of objectives for teacher education.

In teacher education especially, much research has been done to determine if there is a correlation between specific teacher skills and student achievement. After analyzing the research that forms much of the basis for validating performance-based teacher education, Heath and Nielson conclude that "the research on the relation between specific teacher skills and student achievement fails to reveal an empirical basis for performance-based teacher education."

Heath and Nielson's conclusions have a greater applicability than simply to teacher education. For one thing, the research did not differentiate teaching by content, but assumed there was *one* best method to teach all content. For another, the research ignored *who* was being taught. It may not be possible



to prescribe a best method for the classroom at all, since it is impossible to "reveal differences in growth attributable to the administrative (teaching) variables." Likely to be of greater importance in student learning are social and economic factors of a student's homelife, factors that designers of competency-based programs in high schools cannot ignore.

Loser, Ronald. *Thoughts on Behavioral Objectives*. 1974. 6 pages. ED 100 841.

As a mathematician, Loser argues against the basic propositions of behavioral education that assert that unless a measurable change takes place the student has not learned, and that learning will be improved if course "goals are delineated on a day by day basis so that both instructor and student know precisely what is expected of them." Such a theory amounts to dogma, Loser argues, and like any dogma it truncates learning. One cannot behaviorally measure qualities like understanding, enthusiasm, curiosity, appreciation, motivation, or commitment.

The result of behavioral education is that important concepts and ideas are reduced to trivialities because trivialities are most easily measured. Loser wonders if behavioral objectives can be written for any intellectual activities like art, creative writing, math, or any area requiring assimilation of abstract ideas, broad concepts, cohesion of seemingly disjointed concepts, sensitivity and insight, technique, and new forms of expression.

Loser chides the behaviorists for failing to realize that goals are almost never completely realized, that "life is in the striving." While many skills can be taught by behavioral objectives, Loser argues that many cannot, and that it is possible to pursue short-term goals to the detriment of one's long-term welfare.

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Martin, Herbert. *Basic Drafting: A Competency-Based Guide for Students and Teachers.* Lexington, Kentucky: Vocational Education Curriculum Development Center, University of Kentucky, 1975. 192 pages. ED 114 496.

For the most part, competency-based education still remains only a theory in the public schools. The written behavioral objectives and procedures required by this kind of curriculum have not been translated into instructional programs and materials. The challenge to educators and districts is to design and write coherent, structured programs that teach and test demonstrable behaviors.

The most successful programs embodying behavioral goals have generally appeared in occupational or vocational areas. This course is a sample of the quality of material available in program form. It presents a complete first-year course in drafting at the secondary school level. Divided into seven blocks of instruction, the program is designed for the student to complete it at his own speed. Each block contains instructions, a pretest, lessons and learning activities, and a posttest. The book is clearly laid out, handsomely illustrated, and excellently organized.

The author reminds us that the program is flexible and can be altered to fit the design of any school's particular program. Such programs have yet to be written for areas of study outside the vocational arts, but Martin's book gives us an idea of how it might be done.

Order copies from Curriculum Development Center, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506. \$5.00.
Also available from EDRS. MF \$0.83 HC \$10.03.

Oregon State Department of Education. *Oregon Graduation Requirements: Guidelines for Planned Course Statements.* Salem, Oregon: 1974. 52 pages. ED 109 749.

In 1973, the state of Oregon mandated a series of Minimum School Graduation Requirements for graduating high school seniors. By 1978, seniors will have to demonstrate certain "minimum survival" skills that are part of the requirements for a diploma. As part of this competency-based accountability scheme, Oregon school districts have been required to provide evidence that courses in their curriculum are "planned," that is, that each contributes in some way to the creation of specific competencies in an overall scheme of achievement. The district must also provide information on learning and assessment procedures for each planned course.

While this booklet was developed specifically to give Oregon school districts information to meet state requirements, it would undoubtedly be of some use to a district entering the thickets of competency-based instruction. Specific content

and guidelines will naturally vary from district to district and from state to state. Nonetheless, the book offers much helpful advice for developing course statements and identifying competencies.

The booklet presents two basic models for course statements that a district might use. In the first, a course overview, course goals, and minimal competencies are noted. A more detailed second model includes specific assessment procedures, learning activities, and performance indicators for a course. In addition to these models, the booklet provides several samples of course descriptions.

Order copies from EDRS. MF \$0.83 HC \$3.50.



Oregon State Department of Education. *Oregon Graduation Requirements: Guidelines for Record Keeping Procedures and Sample Forms.* Salem, Oregon: 1974. 34 pages. ED 109 750.

One of the greatest difficulties in implementing competency-based education on the district or state level is that the program often requires a new set of record-keeping devices to record students' progress in meeting competencies. This booklet, published by the Oregon Department of Education, comes in response to requests from curriculum planners, teachers, and administrators for clarification of record-keeping procedures required by the Oregon CBE program.

One problem the competency-based record-keeping procedure must accommodate is the difference between competencies and letter grades. In a pure CBE system, letter grades would not exist. The booklet warns that serious initial thinking about the relationship between competencies and grades must be undertaken before a record system is initiated. The booklet presents two options: first, a plan in which course grades and competencies are recorded separately, such that passing or failing a course does not imply passing or failing a competency; or, second, a plan whereby a course grade does indicate whether a competency has been completed or not. This distinction may be necessary, for example, if one competency is contained in several courses. The booklet also presents a unified course-numbering system and a means of identifying and updating competencies.

While no district's plan is completely transferable to another, this set of guidelines and theory may be helpful to a district looking for an efficient way to record competencies in addition to grades. The booklet presents sample classroom

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reporting forms, classroom record and report forms, and samples of district records.

Order copies from EDRS, MF \$0.83 HC \$2.06.

Utz, Robert T., and others. "A Comparative Analysis of Two Modes of Implementing Competency Based Instructional Systems." Paper presented at American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1974, 9 pages. ED 089 468.

In this report, Utz compares the problems involved in instituting competency-based instructional programs in two radically different situations. The first program was instituted in the Toledo Public Schools and utilized a system of pilot programs in selected schools. The second program, instituted in the Toledo Diocesan Schools, was an immediate, broad-based program introduced in an entire school system over a period of two years.

In the Toledo Public Schools, a general "change model" was written that allowed each school to begin work on different areas of its program. Therefore, not all schools were working on the same problems at the same time. Once a particular school's needs were determined, plans were presented to the building administrators. Volunteers were selected, given a ten-hour inservice program in writing and categorizing objectives, criterion-referenced testing, and individualizing strategies. The various programs were tested, expanded, and made available on a broader basis to other volunteers.

Utz sent questionnaires to those who participated in the program. A majority of respondents indicated that the materials aided in identifying student deficiencies.

In contrast to the pilot programs of the Toledo Public Schools, the Toledo Diocesan Schools mandated almost immediate change. The system drew on professional educators from the universities, utilized a great deal of field-testing, and required a great deal of inservice time.

Utz draws several conclusions concerning the success of implementing competency-based programs. First, participation in the program is enhanced when teachers are presented with CBE as a system of organizing and evaluating curriculum, and not as a method of teaching. Teachers are likely to see this as a change dictated from above and outside, and they will correspondingly resent it.

Second, programs should be staffed initially by volunteers. Third, programs were most successful when instructional programs were presented as resources rather than as completed materials for presentation. Fourth, teachers in the program should be rewarded with released time, pay, or graduate credit.

Order from EDRS, MF \$0.83 HC \$1.67.

Westbrook, Douglas C., and Sandefur, Walter. "Involvement of AACTE Institutions in CBTE Programs." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 57, 4 (December 1975), pp. 276-278. EJ 127 699.

With the increasing emphasis in secondary schools on performance-based education, it is only natural that teacher-education institutions should simultaneously develop similar education programs. As an index of the popularity of performance-based education not only in secondary schools but in higher education as well, Westbrook and Sandefur have polled member institutions of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Their results, coupled with earlier survey results in 1973, reveal that the concepts of performance-based teacher education are becoming commonplace in the institutions of higher education.

Of the institutions surveyed and responding, only 17 percent reported no involvement in CBTE and had no plans to become involved. Presently, 44 percent of institutions surveyed are operating a CBTE program on a limited scale. Twenty-five percent of all schools are developing plans to initiate such programs, while 18 percent are operating full programs at present. In two years, the percentage of schools operating "for the most part" CBTE programs tripled. The number of schools reporting full-time CBTE programs multiplied four-fold in two years.

One table reports the method whereby institutions have instituted their programs, and another gives a state-by-state breakdown of the types and percentages of CBTE programs in operation.

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